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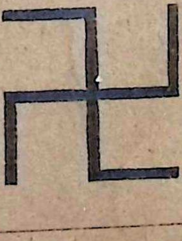
LOTUS BLOSSOMS

THE BHIKKHU SĪLĀCĀRA



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1922

LOTUS BLOSSOMS

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LOTUS . .
BLOSSOMS

BY THE BHIKKHU SĪLĀCĀRA

FOURTH EDITION

> If you urge that I am young and that the time for seeking religion is not yet, then you should know that to seek true religion there never is a time not fit.
>
> *Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching.*

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FOREWORD

DESIGNED to put into the hands of those who are making their first inquiries into the religion called Buddhism, the plan of this little book is a very simple one.

As nearly as may be, a number of passages from various Buddhist writings have been gathered together under different headings, and, after some words of introduction, these are given without any further comment.

This method of presenting the teachings of Buddhism may at first sight seem somewhat abrupt, but it possesses the important advantage of introducing the reader, at the very outset of his quest, to the original source of the religion. It offers him, as it were, a cup or two of clear water, fresh from the spring, as it bubbles up out of the native rock, and before it has had time to become tainted—as all streams sooner or later must—by the pebbles and sandy bottom over which it has flowed. It is hoped, however, that he will not remain satisfied with these few cupfuls, but will proceed to take ever deeper and more copious draughts of the wisdom of the Awakened One. Or, to revert to the imagery of our title:

here are presented only a few blossoms from the garden of the Good Law. Sensible of their fragrance and beauty, the reader is respectfully invited to go where these grew and gather yet others for himself.

⁂ A "Bhikkhu" is a member of the Buddhist order. He is not in any sense a "priest". Indeed, no English equivalent for the word has yet been suggested that is not in some way misleading.—[*Editor.*]

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

This is the Noble Truth of Suffering. Birth is Suffering. Growth and decay is Suffering. Death is Suffering. To be bound to what we do not love is Suffering. To be parted from what we love is Suffering. Not to obtain that for which we long is Suffering. In brief: all the Five Elements of Being are Suffering.

This is the Noble Truth of the Arising of Suffering. It is that Craving which leads from birth to birth, conjoined with lusts and longings which, now here, now there, continually seek satisfaction. It is desire for the gratification of passion; it is craving for eternal life; it is longing for enjoyment here in this present life.

This is the Noble Truth of the Ceasing of Suffering. It is the utter and complete annihilation of this Craving (Taṇhā); separation, freedom, deliverance from it.

This is the Noble Truth of the Way that leads to the Ceasing of Suffering. It is that Noble Eightfold Path which consists of Right Understanding, Right Mindedness, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Endeavour, Right Recollectedness, Right Concentration.

Mahāvagga

BUDDHISM (INTRODUCTORY)

The position which Buddhism occupies among religions is one wholly unique. The great mass of the religions of the world is founded upon some sort of revelation from a supra-human, supernatural source. This religion, on the contrary, is the outcome pure and simple of the strenuous mental and spiritual effort, continued through many years, of a human being unhelped by any outward aid. He was a prince of Nepal, and, though brought up in all the soft life to which princes are used, he was early led to muse and ponder upon the misery which, he observed, fell to the lot of others less fortunate than himself.

Many men, themselves the heirs of happy circumstance, have seen that not every man—that few men indeed—stood in as happy case as themselves, and have remained not too much distressed at the sight. But this man was cast in other mould. Seeing misery in some form or another to be the lot of the great majority of men; seeing also that in the shape of old age, sickness and death, it must certainly come one day, even to princes, he asked himself, with ever increasing intensity of purpose and at last with desperate insistence, what it all meant. He found himself unable, like those he saw around him, to close his eyes to it, and, sitting down in quiet ease, wait until these evils, like some forest fire, overtook and devoured him and his. Resolved to put forth all his energies in an attempt to place himself beyond the reach of the devouring flame, he set himself to find the way of escape.

His quest led him far. Its first stage was that, leaving wife and child behind him, he went forth in utmost poverty to search out and inquire of all those reputed to be wise if perchance with all their knowledge they knew this also: how to escape the evils of old age, disease and death. In the course of his wanderings he received many different replies; some of them very clever and some of them very foolish, but all alike unsatisfactory, since none of them contained a direct answer to his question. Always, at the end of all, for gods as well as for men, soon or late, in seventy years or in seventy million years, there waited the grim spectres dissolution and death.

Many years were thus spent in fruitless search among the reputedly wise, and, disappointed in their results, the young prince resolved henceforth to rely solely on his own exertions. He ceased any longer to inquire of any for the cause of misery and how it might be removed, and, instead, entered upon a course of rigid, ascetic practices, by which he hoped of himself to find the answer to his question. But this too was in vain. He gained indeed by his prodigious penances and mortifications the reputation of a great saint, and, as consequence thereof, awed by the extent and severity of their master's austerities, more than one admiring follower; but the object of his quest remained as far off as ever.

At last, one day, as he sat absorbed as ever over the problem that occupied all his waking hours, from early dawn until late at night, utterly worn out in mind and body by the continual strain, he fainted away. Here he might have died, and his great search thus come to an abrupt close, but that one saw him and brought him milk to drink, the which in his great weakness, forgetting his vows of abstinence, he accepted. The draught revived and refreshed him, and, as he thought over it, he perceived how mistaken he had been so to weaken his body that it threatened to fail him just when he needed it most. He abandoned the more excessive practices of the ascetic life and henceforth took sufficient nourishment to support the body in health, while still continuing his absorbed meditations upon the great problem he had set himself to solve.

Success eventually crowned his arduous struggle. In one last tremendous output of mental and spiritual energy, the problem and its solution lay plain and clear before him. He saw—what indeed he had seen for many weary years—that all existence is necessarily and inevitably bound up with pain of some kind or another; but now he also saw, clearly and beyond any further possibility of doubt, that the cause of all the pain of all the worlds arises from the desire and craving of living beings, whether gods or men, for existence and for the various sensations of pleasure and delight which existence can supply, and that pain can only cease with the ceasing of this craving for delight in the hearts of men and gods. And, of more importance than all the rest, and the crown of his long toil—he also saw the way by which this universal craving so fatal in its results might be totally brought to an end.

At first, it is said, he was so overwhelmed by the magnitude of his discovery and by his keen sense of the difficulty of understanding and appreciating it on the part of those possessed of less earnestness and insight than himself, that he seriously debated with himself whether he should take any steps to make it known publicly to his fellow-men. " The worldling will not understand the doctrine of the bliss that lies in a complete self-surrender to truth. He will call resignation what to the enlightened one is the purest joy; he will see annihilation where the perfected one finds immortality; he will regard as death what the conqueror of self knows to be life everlasting."

"Should I preach the doctrine and should men not comprehend, it would bring me only fatigue and them trouble," he is reported to have said. His quest after his own salvation had been successful, though at the price of heavy labour, and it seemed to him very doubtful if anyone else in all the wide world would be willing to pay a similar price for the prize, even with the stimulus of his example before their eyes, and only having to follow a path already laid out for them by his pioneer exertions. But eventually, as we might expect, sympathy and compassion overcame his doubts, and going to the city of Benares he proclaimed for the first time to his fellow-men the Four Noble Truths: of Suffering, and the Cause of Suffering, and Suffering's Cure and the Path that leads thereto. Henceforth he was called the Buddha, that is, the Awakened One; and this his teaching of Suffering, and of the Path that leads therefrom—which since that day, now nigh upon twenty-five hundred years ago, has spread over the greater part of Asia—has been called Buddhism; that is, the doctrine of Salvation by Enlightenment.

SUFFERING

One of the charges most frequently brought against Buddhism is that it is a religion of pessimism and general gloom; a charge evidently founded upon the fact that sorrow and pain are the words that most frequently recur in statements of Buddhist doctrine. None the less there is no criticism of Buddhism that is more unwarranted than this same charge of pessimism. To speak quite frankly, it can only arise where there has been complete failure to grasp and comprehend the Buddhist outlook upon life, and in most cases, it must be said, this failure is solely due to lack of serious effort in that direction on the part of those who bring the accusation.

In reality Buddhism is the most optimistic of all religions. Apart from the fact that Buddhist countries like Burma and Siam exhibit the spectacle of a happier and more contented people, taken as a whole, than is to be found anywhere outside their borders, a not very profound examination of Buddhist doctrine is all that is required to convince anyone who comes to the task with an open and unbiassed mind that such is the case. It is perfectly true that Buddhism dwells with insistence—as may seem to some, with over-insistence—upon the fact of the pain and sorrow of the world. If there be pain in the world, is there not also some happiness? such may be supposed to say; why then dwell so much upon the gloomy side as if it were the only one—as if there were no other? The objection is quite fair, and yet there is a good reason for the prominence with which pain and misery appear in the Buddhist system.

For, to the great majority of men, the pain that there is in the world is something to which they deliberately and of set purpose close their eyes all the days of their life. Persistently and with determination their gaze is turned only in the direction of what is pleasant and agreeable. One entire half of the picture life presents never receives any attention, and thus they fail of a true view of the whole, an apprehension in strict accordance with the facts. And all to their own loss, be it said, for it can never be gain to anyone to see things otherwise than as they are. This loss it is the endeavour of Buddhism to remedy, and, in insisting as it does upon the fact of pain, it only does what it finds itself compelled to do if men are to be brought to see the world-picture in its entirety and as it really is.

This is the reason for reiteration of the truth of suffering, which is such a pronounced feature in all the Buddhist writings. That it is an extreme view may be granted, yet its advancement is claimed as absolutely necessary in order to counterbalance the other equally extreme view that holds almost universal sway over men's minds, so that from the opposition of the two extremes a juster equilibrium may result. It is as if one had to deal with an intoxicated man who is stumbling along a path that will bring to him his death. To turn him back, harsh words, even hard blows may be necessary; but no sensible person would dream of finding fault with the one who made use of such words or blows in the endeavour to save the drunken man from his impending fate, for it would be remembered that they were directed towards one not in his proper mind. Were he in his right senses, such treatment would be regarded, and rightly so, as wholly unjustifiable.

And this is exactly how the case stands with the world at large from the standpoint of Buddhism. Constant repetition of the truth of suffering may be unwelcome, but it is necessary. For surely no one will deny that there is suffering in the world. And if he is to be condemned for a pessimist who calls attention to the fact, then the end of sanity and all right reason seems perilously near. Is that physician to be called a pessimist who, finding his patient seriously ill, informs him: "Thus and thus thou ailest; here and here"? Is the engineer to be accused of pessimism who, knowing the fact, informs his general that a deep and dangerous torrent lies in the path of the advancing army, the which to cross will require a stout bridge? Surely not, for each has only spoken the truth. But if the physician proceeds further to tell the sick man that he has in his possession a medicine that will surely cure him of all his trouble, and if the engineer goes on to assure his general that he has at his disposal all the means necessary for the throwing up of a bridge that will enable the army to cross the raging stream in perfect safety, any charge against either of these two that they are pessimists at once falls to the ground, any foundation it may have had being utterly destroyed.

So it is with the teaching of the Buddha. Sorrow and pain there is undoubtedly, but—there Is a Way Out. Such is His Message, His transcendently Good News, His 'Gospel'; a message, a good news, a gospel, that cannot be repeated too loudly or too often. There is not one Noble Truth only, the Noble Truth of Suffering: there are Four. But the first of the Four Truths is the Truth of Suffering.

There is no fire like lust; no sin like hate; no sorrow like the sorrow of existence. No happiness is greater than peace of mind.

Dhammapada

Long is the night to the watcher. Long is the way to him who is weary. Long is the world-wandering to blinded beings that know not the truth.

Dhammapada

My efforts are directed towards lightening the burden of pain and shaking it off for ever. Therefore seek I the path of salvation final and complete.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Whoso is shut up between four walls, for him there is no escape. Thus enclosed is the world between the rock-walls of birth, old age, sickness and death. He only who has understood the law and acts accordingly shall escape this prison-house of accumulated sorrows.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Wander through the land converting those that are still unconverted, acting as teachers to this pain-riven world, and wheresoever the darkness of ignorance reigns, there kindle the light. Thus go ye forth, filled with compassion, bringing salvation to all.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Tell him, I look for no recompense—not even to be born in heaven—but seek instead the welfare of men, to bring back those that have gone astray; to enlighten those that live in dark and dismal error; to banish from the world all pain and all sorrow.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Whether Buddhas arise, O bhikkhus, or whether Buddhas do not arise, it remains a fact and the fixed and necessary constitution of being that all its constituents are subject to suffering. This fact a Buddha discovers and masters, and, when he has discovered and mastered it, he announces, teaches, publishes, proclaims, discloses, minutely explains and makes it clear, that all the constituents of being are subject to suffering.

Aṅguttara Nikāya

Which, O disciples, think you is greater ; the tears which you have poured out, wailing and lamenting, during this long pilgrimage, ever hastening towards new births and new deaths ; joined to the unloved, separated from the loved—this, or the waters of the Four Great Seas ? Without beginning and without end is this ocean of existence. Unknowable is the beginning of beings wrapped in ignorance, who through desire are led to life ever-renewed, and so pursue the round of re-birth. Thus for long have ye suffered sorrow and pain and misfortune and fed the graveyards full ;—long enough truly to become dissatisfied with all existence ; long enough to turn away from all existence ; long enough to break loose from it all.

Saṃyutta Nikāya

THE CAUSE AND CURE OF SUFFERING

Without going more deeply than necessary into psychology and metaphysics, it may be said that things of themselves are neither good nor bad, pleasurable nor painful, nor in fact, anything at all. Only as they come in contact with a sentient consciousness, do qualities of any kind appear ; these qualities, good, bad, sweet, sour, or whatever they are, being nothing more than the expression of a relation existing between them and the sensing consciousness.

Such being the case, it follows that if a man finds pleasure in anything, it is merely because there is agreement between that thing and that expression of consciousness which we call desire, and not because of any inherent property in the thing itself. Similarly, if certain things give a man pain, this is so, not because pain is an eternal property of the thing itself, but solely because of a disagreement between it and the man's desires.

Thus, ever and always, sorrow lies in failing to obtain the object desired, or in having forced upon one the object not desired. Pain is founded upon naught else but the existence in us of loves for some things and hates for others, these in their turn springing from an erroneous idea of the nature of things; to wit, that the things we desire are intrinsically worth desiring, and the things we hate, intrinsically deserving of hatred. The cure of pain, then, is to be rid of loves and hates and the delusive notion in which these loves and hates find their root. Desire is thus the immediate cause of all sorrow, and the total cessation of desire, sorrow's final and perfect cure.

From lust springs sorrow; from lust springs fear. Whoso is wholly free from lust knows neither sorrow nor fear.

Dhammapada

Whoso conquers desire that is difficult to subdue, sorrow slips from him, like water off a lotus-leaf.

Dhammapada

A noble truth I would discover; an aim unlike the common aims of men. I would bring to an end the pain that springs from existence.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

No living, sentient creature that yields to craving can escape pain. Those who thoroughly understand this rouse themselves to abhorrence of craving.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Driven by their appetites, mankind run hither and thither like hunted hares. Therefore a disciple who is striving after holiness should suppress all craving.

Dhammapada

What is the root of evil? Craving, hatred, and delusion are the root of evil. And what is the root of good? To be free from craving, hatred and delusion is the root of good.

Majjhima Nikāya

Whoso would conquer suffering, with difficulty finds a friend to aid. To know religious truth requires rare insight. Wherefore let us hold together as friends that we may put an end to suffering.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Good it is to bind the body, to put a bridle upon the tongue, to bring the mind unto subjection: good is perfect self-mastery. The disciple who is lord of himself shall be set free from all sorrow.

Dhammapada

The senses truly are our greatest enemies; they are to us a prolific source of sorrow. Like to a wild tiger, raging like a firebrand, they are the greatest of all the evils of this our world.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Let the disciple choose only noble, pure and faithful friends, and let himself be mild and benevolent, blameless in all his walk and conversation. Then, full of joy, shall he bring all sorrows to an end.

Dhammapada

How can ye laugh, how take delight in this world, ye that are lit only by the flame of the baser desires? Ye dwell in a darkness that never departs, if ye seek not the light that can drive it away.

Dhammapada

The gift of the truth exceeds all other gifts. The savour of the truth excels all other savours. The delight of the truth surpasses all other delights. The desire after deliverance overmasters every sorrow.

Dhammapada

The lust after pleasure is the source of all pain; it is an enemy who stealthily approaches us clothed in the garb of a friend. The desire for delight is as a fierce fire, flaming forth in the very heart of the house.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The weary course of sorrow can only come to an end by creating in your breasts a heart that desires nothing. Once for all leave behind you the long labyrinth of existence, and step by step moun steadily upwards, like the sun that daily advances over the western hills.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Whoso has taken refuge in the Buddha, his Doctrine and his Brotherhood, he knows the Four Noble Truths with perfect understanding: Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Removing of Suffering, and the Path that leads to the Removing of Suffering. This is a place of safety; this is the best place of refuge. Whoso chooses this refuge shall be raised far beyond the reach of all sorrow.

Majjhima Nikāya

THE PATH

Thus far, in the first three truths, of Sorrow, and Sorrow's Cause, and Sorrow's Cure, we have only the statement of the problem, as it were—the diagnosis of the disease. What is still wanting is the solution of the problem, the method of the cure of the disease. This want is supplied by the fourth and final Noble Truth, the Noble Truth of the Eight-fold Path.

It is thus called because there are in it eight different parts or members, but these upon examination divide themselves naturally into three main divisions, under which new aspect the whole method and meaning of the Path reveal themselves in a manner at once simple and comprehensive.

For the Path is merely the method or process by which is to be cured the malady of craving—that is, of suffering—that is, of existence; since, according to the first three truths, existence is of necessity bound up with suffering. It is important to remember this. However deep and profound may be the searchings of Buddhist psychology into the abysses of the human consciousness, it would be a mistake to suppose that this is due to a love of such things for themselves, on the part of the founder of Buddhism. Such is far from being the case. These are all looked upon as means only, never as ends. And it is only because the end aimed at is no light matter, that the means for its achievement partake of a like weighty character. First, last and always, Buddhism is a method and only a method, by which pain is to be banished, salvation from sorrow accomplished. It may indeed not unfitly be called the Methodism of Asia, and the parallel between it and the Methodism of the Wesleys is even closer than at first sight may be imagined, since Buddhism in its origin was the appearance of a potent and quickening spirit among the dry bones of the elder Brahmanism. Here, however, the parallel ends. The method of the Buddha is a method of Salvation by Enlightenment, not by emotion; and its three grand stages are: first, Morality; second, Mind-culture; and third, Wisdom.

To follow the path is more precious to the disciple than all earthly power, re-birth in heaven, or lordship of the world itself.

Dhammapada

These, friends, are the three grand passions: the craving of lust, the passion for existence and the blindness of ignorance. With the arising of ignorance, passions also arise. With the destruction of ignorance, passion likewise is destroyed. And it is the Noble Eight-fold Path which leads to the destruction of passion.

Majjhima Nikāya

These are the four impulses to existence: the clinging to craving, to speculation, to religious ceremony and to the teaching of the immortality of the *I*. Through the arising of craving arises also the impulse to existence; through the annihilation of craving is the impulse to existence also annihilated, and it is the Noble Eight-fold Path which leads to the annihilation of the impulse to existence.

Majjhima Nikāya

Craving and hatred, anger and discord, hypocrisy and envy, jealousy and niggardliness, deceit and cunning, obstinacy and clamorousness, pride and arrogance, indifference and sluggishness, are of evil. There is a Middle Path by means of which escape may be found from indifference and sluggishness and all the other evils; which makes one to see and to know: which leads to turning away, to clear understanding, enlightenment, salvation: it is the Noble Eight-fold Path.

Majjhima Nikāya

THE FIVE GOOD RULES

(From "The Light of Asia")

Kill not, for pity's sake and lest ye slay
 The meanest thing upon its upward way.
Give freely and receive, but take from none
 By greed, or force, or fraud, what is his own.
Bear not false witness, slander not nor lie;
 Truth is the speech of inward purity.
Shun drugs and drinks which work the wit abuse;
 Clear minds, clean bodies need no Soma juice.
Touch not thy neighbour's wife, neither commit
 Sins of the flesh unlawful and unfit.

—SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

MORALITY

It is only in accordance with the practical nature of Buddhism that morality—right speech, right behaviour and right means of livelihood—should be the first stage of the journey that brings at last to the supreme good—the extinction of craving. The practice of speech, right and good, and of deeds honest and upright, the while maintaining one's self by the pursuit of some fit and proper occupation, that does harm or hurt to no creature alive—these are the indispensable, preliminary steps to the acquirement of a subdued, well-tempered mind and the wisdom that follows thereupon. It is vain to expect any gain in clearness of intellectual vision, any progress in true wisdom, until these preliminaries are complied with; their opposites, unrighteous speech, behaviour and manner of life, are effectual hindrances which must first be removed.

Morality here is put upon a rational basis. All the religions in the world tell men to be good, but no reason quite satisfying to the intelligence is given *why* men should choose this, the difficult, path rather than the other, the easy one. In Buddhism, however, ethics really is an *ethos*—a method of achieving an end, or at least it is a part, and an important part, of such a method. We are never left open to the approach of the more than doubtful idea that it is in itself an end. Only in order that he may obtain the Great Enlightenment that will cure him of all woe is the Buddhist counselled to obey these three behests of morality, right speech, right action, and proper manner of living; for with these he may fare farther—to the topmost heights of wisdom eventually; but wanting them his way remains for ever barred. Morality is, as it were, one of the wings by which the bird of earth mounts to the heights of bliss; wisdom being the other aid in that great flight. Hence all the Buddhist writings are charged with continual and strenuous injunctions to follow the path of right action in every detail of human activity. And not only to friends and relatives must the Buddhist practise right behaviour, but also to the meanest living creature that crosses his path. Compassion and kindness for all things alive must be the constant watchword of his life.

It need scarcely be said that for the great majority of us common men, this, the first stage of the Path, is the one that might well occupy our exclusive attention. The fulfilment in perfection of all its requirements would mean nothing short of sainthood on the part of him who so fulfilled them, and saints are few on this earth of ours. But, wheresoever they are found—in whatsoever church or creed—there are those who have successfully accomplished this first and most important stage of the journey towards the Great Release.

And here, it may be added, lies the explanation of that tolerant attitude towards other faiths, which is such an outstanding characteristic of Buddhism. The man who obeys the behests of morality, to whatsoever form of faith he belongs, is on the Path, whether he himself is aware of it or not. To that extent at least he may be called, without impropriety, a Buddhist. For Buddhism is no mere creed. It is the Dhamma—the expression of the law of All the Worlds—the statement of the Norm of all Existence, high and low; other than in compliance wherewith is felicity for none.

It is the laying down of the simple proposition that two and two make four.

Meeting one who denied that this was so, and affirmed instead that they made five, or twenty-six, or some other such number, it would be impossible to be angry with such a one, much less to seize him and subject him to bodily harm on account of his views. One could only be sorry for him, and—if he were willing to hearken—endeavour to enlighten him as to his error; and if we were unwilling, we could still go on our way in peace; our own belief in the correctness of the proposition serene and unshaken.

RIGHT SPEECH

A courteous behaviour keeps the heart at peace; that lacking, the seed of every virtue dies.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Courtesy is the most precious of jewels. Beauty without courtesy is like a garden without flowers.

Buddhacarita

To shun the company of the witless; to hold communion with the wise; to give honour where honour is due—this is a great blessing.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

Subdue the angry by friendliness; overcome evil with good; conquer those that are greedy by liberality, and the liar with the speech of truth.

Dhammapada

Whoso possesses virtue and discernment, is upright, speaks the truth and faithfully discharges his duty, he is esteemed and highly prized by all.

Dhammapada

Be steadfast in the performance of duties great and small. Lead a life free from blame and in accordance with the precepts, and let your speech be of like nature.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

Forbearance and friendly speech; intercourse with the earnest and striving; discourse concerning the Doctrine in fitting season—this is a very great blessing.

Mahāmaṅgala Sutta

Let not anyone speak falsely. Let not anyone lead another to speak falsely, nor yet approve of the action of one who speaks falsely. Let every kind of lying and false speech be put away from among you.

Dhamma Sutta

RIGHT ACTION

There is no happiness apart from righteousness.

Attanagaluvimsa

What is a real gift? A gift for which no kind of return whatever is expected.

Prasnottaromālikā

Even if a man has power over others, yet ought he to be gentle with the weak.

Udānavagga

Like food besmeared with poison, I abhor such happiness as is tainted with unrighteousness.

Jātakamālā

The signs of true religions are good-will, love, truthfulness, purity, nobility and goodness.

Asoka Inscription

Whoso travels on the way of righteousness is ever near me, even when he is far away from me.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

With a pure heart full of love, I will act towards others exactly as I would act towards myself.

Lalita Vistara

The deeds we have done in the past follow us like our shadows: for good or for ill, as the case may be.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

To shun all vice, to practise all virtue, to purify one's heart—this is the religion of the Buddhas.

Dhammapada

Whoso is wholly free from sin, as the sky from stain and the moon from soil—him I call noble.

Udānavagga

The Buddha esteems not the gifts offered to him, but only the alms that are shared with those in need.

Milindapañha

After you have learnt the Doctrine, let your purified hearts find delight in bringing forth corresponding deeds.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Better is it for me to die in battle with the tempter than to be vanquished and still continue to live.

Padhāna Sutta

Liberality, courtesy, good-will, and unselfishness—these are to the world what the linch-pin is to the chariot.

Sigālovāda Sutta

To give alms, to live according to the precepts, to take care of relatives, to be blameless in deed—this is a great blessing.

Mahāmaṅgala Sutta

The good things of this world pass away, but the treasures earned through righteous living are imperishable and never pass away.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

As a man washes hand with hand, and foot with foot, so also is integrity refined through wisdom, and wisdom through integrity.

Dhammapada

As I am, so are these. As these are, so am I. Thus identifying himself with others, the wise man neither kills nor causes to be killed.

Sutta Nipāta

Thou dost not well to entice me into evil ways. Even if thou sayest " No one will know," is the deed any the less evil for that ?

Jātakamālā

Whoso injures no living thing, whether strong or weak ; whoso neither kills nor yet causes to be killed—him call noble.

Dhammapada

Whoso is charitable is everywhere beloved; by the kind and good he is prized as a friend, and at death his heart is full of peace.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Whoso belongs to the Order of the Buddha, being a member thereof, will avoid taking the life of any creature, were it only an ant or a worm.

Mahāvagga

It is not by making beautiful speeches that one becomes a wise man. Whoso is peaceable and friendly and free from fear, he truly is a wise man.

Dhammapada

The good man tastes joy in the two states, both here and hereafter. He is filled with an inward joy when he considers his own pure deeds.

Dhammapada

To cease from evil; to keep it far away from one; to shun intoxicating liquors; to give good heed to the Teaching—this is a great blessing.

Mahāmaṅgala Sutta

To be rough and harsh, slanderous, faithless, void of compassion, haughty, full of avarice, giving to none—this, and not the mere eating of flesh, is impure.

Amagandha Sutta

A beautiful word which is not followed by a corresponding action is like a splendid and bright-hued but odourless flower. It bears no fruit.

Dhammapada

This wise man who knows the power of death and lives in accordance with the precepts speedily makes smooth for himself the road that leads to Nibbāna.

Dhammapada

My deed is my possession. My deed is mine inheritance! My deed is the mother's womb that bore me. My deed is the race to which I belong. My deed is my refuge.

Anguttara Nikāya

The wise man will shun an unchaste life as if it were a heap of glowing coals; and whoso is not in a position to live in entire chastity will keep from adultery.

Dhammika Sutta

It is not I, O disciples, that quarrel with the world but the world that quarrels with me. A teacher of the truth does not quarrel with anyone in the world.

Saṃyutta Nikāya

Guard against all evil, be it in thought, in word or in deed. If thou payest heed to these three divisions of virtue, soon shalt thou attain to the path of the Holy Ones.

Dhammapada

To feed a single good man is infinitely greater in point of merit than studying questions about heaven and earth, spirits and demons, such as occupy so many men.

Sutta of the 42 Sections

There is not a spot upon earth, neither in the sky, neither in the sea, nor yet in the clefts of the mountains, where an evil deed does not bring woe to the doer thereof.

Udānavagga

As the merchant who has treasure with him shuns the roads that are dangerous, or as he who prizes his life shrinks from poison, so do ye guard yourselves against evil doing.

Dhammapada

Riches, beauty, perfumes and jewels, are no such adornments as is right behaviour. True beauty and true happiness are only to be found where right feelings have their home in the heart.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Wherein does religion consist? It consists in doing as little harm as possible, in doing abundance of good, in the practice of love, compassion, truthfulness and purity in all the walks of life.

Asoka Inscription

Keep virtue! Keep purity! Cherishing, practising purity, guard it in all your walk and conversation. The slightest lapse from watchfulness grows gradually worse, step by step.

Majjhima Nikāya

Anger, drunkenness, self-will, feigned piety, treachery, envy, ostentation, pride and conceit, companionship with the unrighteous—this, and not the mere eating of flesh, is impurity.

Amagandha Sutta

Whoso is wise will diligently practise purity in all his walk and conversation. In the pilgrimage through the wilds of death and re-birth, purity of behaviour is a trusty guide.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Not by birth does one become an outcast.
Not by birth does one become a noble.
Through deeds it is that one becomes an outcast.
Through deeds it is that one becomes a noble.

Vasala Sutta

Pure be our conduct, our speech, our mind, our body; let us be open and honourable, not secret and concealed. Yet let us not be puffed up, nor look down upon others on account of this purity.

Majjhima Nikāya

However numerous may be the bonds of relationship and mutual love that here enwrap us, in death must each one of us go hence. singly and alone; our only support in that day will be our own good deeds.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Neither abstention from fish or flesh, nor nudity, nor a shaven head, nor braided hair, nor disfigurement of the body, nor many-coloured garments, nor the worship of any deity, can purify a man who is not free from delusion.

Amagandha Sutta

A man readily perceives the faults of his neighbours; his own, however, he perceives only with difficulty. Men eagerly uncover the failings of others, but their own they carefully conceal, as the cheat the loaded dice.

Dhammapada

To be unbridled in the pursuit of the sensual delights of this world; to cherish lascivious desires, to live in impurity, to be needlessly unbelieving; to be unjust; to be obstinate—this, and not the mere eating of flesh, is impure.

Amagandha Sutta

Whoso strengthens himself to follow the paths of righteousness cuts off at its source the stream of pain and distress. Whoso, on the contrary, through evil ways beclouds the mind, he loses the seed of all virtue.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Those in this world who are wicked; who neglect the fulfilment of their duties; who are slanderers and falsifiers, dishonourable, who act like the lowest of men—of these, and not of the mere eating of flesh, may we utter the word " unclean."

Amagandha Sutta

The adherent of the Teaching does not kill or cause to be killed any living thing, neither does he approve of killing in others. He refuses to hurt or harm any creature whatsoever, those that are strong as well as those that are weak.

Dhammika Sutta

If a man speaks or acts out of an evil heart, pain follows him as the wheel follows the hoof of the ox that draws the cart.

If a man speaks or acts out of a kindly and compassionate heart, good fortune follows him even like the shadow that never leaves him.

Dhammapada

Whoso deprives creatures of life; whoso uses lying speech; whoso takes to himself what is not his own; whoso leads astray his neighbour's wife; whoso is addicted to intoxicating liquor, and gives himself over to gluttony; by such actions already in this life he undermines his own well-being.

Dhammapada

If the practice of purity is followed as the rule of conduct, then is true religion found; otherwise virtue withers away. Therefore let all your behaviour be founded upon this command of mine. Where the law of purity has taken firm root, there the tumult of emotion is kept under control, as a herd of cattle is led in good order by capable herdsman.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The husband shall treat his wife with respect and kindness; be faithful to her; esteem her above all others, and provide her with the apparel and adornments befitting her station. The wife shall keep her house in good order; hospitably entertain friends and relations; be faithful to her husband, and discharge with industry and zeal all the duties of a good housewife.

Sigālovāda Sutta

The layman who holds to the Teaching will not be addicted to strong drink. He will never invite anyone to drink, neither will he approve of drinking in another, since he knows that it all ends in madness. For, following upon drunkenness, fools fall into vice and induce others to drink. Men should shun this haunt of all evil, this madness, this foolishness, in which only the witless find delight.

Dhammika Sutta

If you speak to a woman, do so in purity of heart. Say to yourself: "Placed in this sinful world, let me be as the spotless lily, that takes no taint from the mire in which it grows." Is she old: regard her as your mother. Is she of high degree: look upon her as your sister. Is she of lowly birth: think of her as of a younger sister. Is she a child: treat her with deference and politeness.

Sutta of the 42 Sections

RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

Whatsoever causes yourself pain, therewith wound not another.

Udānavagga

Follow the path of duty; show kindness to thy brothers and bring them not into suffering.

Avādana Sutta

Whoso hurts and harms living creatures, destitute of sympathy for any living thing, let him be known as an outcast.

Vasala Sutta

Whoso strives only for his own happiness, and so doing hurts or kills living creatures that also seek for happiness, he shall find no happiness after death.

Dhammapada

Whoso does harm to other creatures for the sake of his own advantage binds himself with the fetters of enmity—from enmity never is free.

Dhammapada

The destroying of living creatures, murder, wounding, theft, false witness, treachery and deception—this, and not the mere eating of flesh, is impure.

Amagandha Sutta

Not for the sake of my own well-being do I practise universal benevolence; but I love benevolence, because my wish is to do good to the world.

Jātakamālā

The wise firmly believe that compassion is the quintessence of all righteousness. What virtues are there that have not their root in compassion?

Jātakamālā

Whoso is quarrelsome or greedy: whoso cherishes craving: whoso is envious, wicked, shameless, and shuns not the paths of evil—him know to be an outcast.

Vasala Sutta

If you would do me a friendly service, cease for ever from following the chase! The poor creatures of the forest that live there with dim, dream-like consciousness, have a just claim upon our compassion.

Jātakamālā

The truly virtuous will help those in need out of pure compassionateness, and not from any hope of personal gain, caring little whether their good deed is seen of another or not.

Jātakamālā

So lives the disciple as a reconciler of those that are divided, as one who binds still more closely those that are friends; as an establisher of peace; a maker of peace; one rich in peace; ever a speaker of peaceful words.

Tevijja Sutta

If a man has once done evil, let him not continue therein, nor yet look back upon his evildoing with desire thereafter, for the end of sin is sorrow. But when a man has done good, let him continue so to do, and ever think thereon with longing. Virtuous deeds bring happiness.

Dhammapada

Not superstitious rites, but kindness to servants and underlings, respect to those deserving of respect, self-control coupled with kindness in dealing with living creatures, these and virtuous deeds of like nature are verily the rites that ought everywhere to be performed.

Asoka Inscription

To have a compassionate heart; that is of all things the most necessary. We should not oppress or ill-treat anyone. We should turn away from error and walk in the right path. With help and consolation we should draw nigh to those that languish in chains.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The bhikkhu or bhikkhuni, the pious lay-brother or lay-sister, who constantly fulfil all their duties, great and small; whose way of life is free from blame, and in accordance with the precepts—these are they who in the fittest manner show their respect and esteem for the Perfect One.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

An adherent of the Doctrine should everywhere avoid appropriating to himself what is not given to him, or what he knows belongs to another. He should not cause another to take such, neither should he approve of the conduct of those who do so. He should shun every kind of forbidden appropriation.

Dhammika Sutta

Those in this world who are unrestrained in their behaviour towards other living things; who turn their minds towards the injuring of others after robbing them of their possessions; who are wicked, cruel, harsh and disrespectful—of these, and not of the mere eating of flesh we may utter the word " unclean ".

Amagandha Sutta

Parents should train their children in all that is good; they should protect them from evil, teach them due order, assist them continually both by precept and example, and withhold not from them their rightful inheritance.

Children should be obedient to their parents, and faithfully fulfil all the duties of children. They should help their parents to take care of their property, support them when they are old and feeble, make themselves in all respects worthy to be their heirs, and ever hold their memory in honour.

Sigālovāda Sutta

I do not approve of every offering, yet neither do I disapprove of every offering. An offering for which cattle, sheep, goats and other animals are slaughtered ; for which many kinds of living creatures are destroyed ; of such an offensive offering, truly I do not approve. And why ? Because such an offering is not fitting for the Holy Ones nor for those who walk the way of the Holy Ones. An offering, however, for which neither cattle, nor sheep, nor goats, nor another animals are slaughtered, for which numerous kinds of animals are not destroyed, of such an inoffensive offering truly I approve. And why ? Because such an inoffensive offering is fitting for the Holy Ones and for those who walk the way of the Holy Ones.

Aṇguttara Nikāya

MIND CULTURE

When the requirements of morality have all been complied with—in part at least—the next stage of the onward journey is the mastery of the mind. There need be no illusions about this reach of the road to peace. If the control of the body is difficult, the control of the mind is a hundred times more so. Yet there have been and there are those who have obtained this control and " what man has done, man can do ".

Its first step is what is called " Right Endeavour," the simple meaning of which is that the man who has in some degree purged his speech and behaviour of the grosser and more unworthy elements, has now to endeavour to check every evil state of mind from arising within him the instant it shows signs of arising, and must likewise set himself to bring to an end whatever evil states may already find place within him—thoughts of craving, of anger and ill-will, and all tendencies towards regard for self in opposition to others. In addition to this he must strive to beget in himself good and wholesome states of mind, thoughts of universal goodwill, of kindness, of compassion, and of sympathy, and make efforts to increase and bring to greater perfection whatever the desirable states of mind to which he has already attained. This is Right Endeavour ; and most unweariedly, with constant and copious illustration and parable, does the Buddha seek to impress upon His followers the absolute necessity for diligence, earnestness, and ceaseless exertion if they would win the prize set before them. It is no idle, apathetic life, this to which He calls them, but one of intense, almost desperate activity, for there is none to help them but themselves. This is a Grand Highway that must be trodden by each on his own feet. None can carry or be carried by another, one smallest inch of the way. The Buddha Himself claims only to show the way—nothing more. Progress toward the goal depends upon each individual's proper effort and upon nothing else.

This declaration of strenuousness as a vital, if not indeed *the* most vital feature in the Buddhist scheme of salvation, may possibly come as a surprise to some —and they are not a few—who have been brought up in the opinion generally current in the West, that Buddhism is a religion whose baneful influence it is to produce a state of chronic apathy in all who have the misfortune to be born under its banner. None the less it is the simple truth that there is no room in Buddhism for the idler or the lover of ease in any shape or form ; as indeed could not be otherwise in a faith that teaches men to rely for salvation upon their own individual effort, and denies them all help from any outside source whatsoever, except such help as is to be found in the sympathy and kindly goodwill of fellow-pilgrims upon the same journey. The prize is only for the striving—for none else.

Such endeavour as has just been mentioned implies an attitude of ceaseless watchfulness and vigilance, and this is what is meant by the next member of the Mind-control stage of the Path—Right Recollectedness; and it becomes a watchfulness and vigilance exercised not only over the mind and its functioning, but over every action of the body as well. He who practises Right Recollectedness never for a moment allows his mind to wander idly, but keeps it always fixed upon whatever he may be doing at the moment, no matter how trivial and unimportant it may seem to be, the object being to train it to observe automatically the attitude of watchfulness and vigilance and thus so to make the advent of evil states impossible to a greater and greater degree according as the habit of watchfulness becomes more and more confirmed. Such an one also keeps his attention fixed upon every mood and emotion as it arises within him, being aware at every instant: "Such and such an emotion is present; such and such an emotion has passed away and given place to such and such another emotion." Needless to say, effort of this kind is very defective and inefficient in its initial stages, and involves considerable strain on the person's powers; but, as with everything else, it is the first step which is most difficult; each succeeding step becomes more and more easy, as this habit of constant recollectedness of what is occurring within one is set up and maintained day after day, even though with occasional and inevitable lapses.

After the discipline of Right Recollectedness a man is prepared to practise with some hope of success the further element of the stage of Mind-control—Right Concentration. This, briefly put, is the effort of the mind to raise itself, so to speak, above itself, through eight different stages of absorption, one after another, until the world and all that it holds, the very knowledge of its own existence, slips away from the mind, and it is left in a state that is not to be named by any name we men on lower levels know—a state that is not to be called either perception or yet non-perception of anything, a state that is the ante-chamber to the one, last, highest state of all, Nibbāna. In the first stage of Right Concentration, all temptations to evil have for the time being simply ceased to exist, have no power whatever over a man, the while his mind considers and deliberates upon its object. In the second stage, consideration and deliberation are left behind and only calm certainty of mind is experienced, joyous and blissful. In the third stage, joy is left behind and only a perfect ease, a contemplative serenity experienced. And in the fourth stage, done with all memory of past joys and sorrows, the man abides in the perfect rapture of a mind wholly calmed and self-possessed. It were useless to mention what few details are known concerning the further four stages of *Jhāna*, as this form of mental concentration is called. They can only rightly be practised under the guidance of a thoroughly competent instructor, the same remark applying, though perhaps not so strictly, to the first four lower stages. Enough here to say that such practice of Right Concentration has nothing whatever to do with phantasms and delusions; that it is not a method of playing tricks with the mental apparatus and causing it to conceive the image of the thing that is not, in the place of the thing that is. On the contrary, its practice, as stage after stage it progresses towards the goal, is a close and closer approach to reality, a getting rid of phantasms and delusions, not a conjuring forth and harbouring of them—a getting rid of just such phantasms and delusions as the life of the senses ordinarily begets in even the sanest minded of men, and following upon that riddance, the attainment to clear and undistorted vision of deepest, uttermost Truth.

ENDEAVOUR, RECOLLECTEDNESS, CONCENTRATION

Goodwill towards all beings is the true religion.

Buddhacarita

Blessed is the man whose senses are curbed and wholly under control.

Udānavagga

Cherish in your hearts boundless goodwill towards all that lives.

Metta Sutta

Above all things be not heedless! Heedlessness is the foe of virtue.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Strive with all your strength and let not sloth find a place in your hearts.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

I cherish goodwill to all beings alive, footless, four-footed, or with many feet.

Cullavagga

Trust in outward help brings distress; only trust in one's self brings strength and joy.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

If in doing good one thinks no more about the result, ambition and anger disappear.

Lalita Vistara

All beings long after happiness; therefore let all beings be embraced in thy compassion.

Mahāvaṃsa

I consider the welfare of all beings as something for which I must never cease to strive.

Asoka Inscription

Whoso is condemned by the world, let him not therefore cherish feelings of enmity against it.

Sammaparibbajaniya Sutta

Whoso, when he is reviled, lets not resentment have place in his heart, has won a shining victory.

Udānavagga

Awake! Arise! Is there then slumber for those that are diseased and pierced by the arrows of pain?

Uṭṭhāna Sutta

The righteous prize pain highly, as if it were gain, when thereby they can increase the welfare of another.

Jātakamāla

Conquer your foe by force and you add to his enmity. Conquer by love and you reap no after sorrow.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The wise, the meditative, the constant, the earnest and ever-striving, reach Nibbāna, the supreme happiness.

Dhammapada

As the elephant in battle endures the arrow that is shot at him, so will I patiently endure the insults of the many.

Dhammapada

What does it matter to thee whether another be guilty or guiltless? Come, friend, and look to thine own ways!

Amagandha Sutta

If you wish to show your respect for the departed Buddha, follow the example he has set you of patience and forbearance.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

दिल्ली स्मारक
रेस्मी स्मारक
पुस्तकालय

As sharp reed-grass cuts the hand that does not seize it properly, so asceticism, unfitly practised, leads to the downward path.

Dhammapada

Be watchful! Have done with indolence! Travel the true Path! Whoso walks therein happy he lives in this and in all worlds.

Dhammapada

As rain does not soak through into a well-thatched house, even so desires can find no entrance into a well-guarded heart.

Dhammapada

As the jasmine shakes off the blossoms that have withered, so should ye, my disciples, throw far from you craving and hatred.

Dhammapada

Happily then let us live: among those that hate, free from hatred. In this hate-filled world let hate ever remain far from us.

Dhammapada

He who holds back the rising flood of anger like a swift-rolling chariot—him I do call an able driver: other people only hold the reins.

Dhammapada

Though a man conquer in battle thousands and thousands of men, a yet greater conqueror still is he who has conquered himself.

Dhammapada

Carrying neither stick nor sword, sympathetic and kindly, the disciple bears love and compassion towards all living creatures.

Majjhima Nikāya

To possess a mind unshaken by contact with the things of the world, serene, passionless, and full of peace—this a great blessing.

Mahāmangala Sutta

The wise man does not remain standing still where he has made a beginning, but ever reaches forward towards fuller enlightenment.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

As the high, rocky mountain-range stands unmoved amid the storm, so do the truly wise unshaken stand, alike in praise and in blame.

Dhammapada

Whoso in deed and word and thought keeps himself from sin, who maintains this threefold mastery over himself—him I call a noble.

Dhammapada

Let us do good and keep watch over our thoughts, that we may keep ourselves free from all sin. As is the seed, so also shall be the harvest.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Devote yourselves to earnest effort; keep watch over your hearts; deliver yourselves from error as the elephant extricates himself from the swamp.

Dhammapada

The witless one who gives way to anger and thinks to triumph by the utterance of abuse will always be conquered by him who is mild in his speech.

Udānavagga

The richest man, if not of contented mind, must endure pain and loss. A poor man who lives in content may truly be called rich.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Thou thyself, spur thyself on, and by thyself purify thyself! So shalt thou be self-guarded, and, full of insight, live in blessedness.

Dhammapada

By manly deeds, by earnest striving, by self-discipline and renunciation, make for yourselves, ye wise, an island that no flood can overwhelm.

Dhammapada

If one does you violence, break not forth into anger and imprecations. The power of Truth withers away in the presence of anger and hate.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The blinded never consider that all of us here must one day die; but those who rightly think upon this—for them all conflict turns to peace.

Dhammapada

He whose senses no longer attach themselves to names and forms, who no longer is perturbed over transient things—he truly may be called a disciple.

Dhammapada

Yield not to idleness, neither give way to lust and craving! Whoso, full of earnestness, is diligent in devotion, he attains to great happiness.

Dhammapada

You must labour for yourselves; the Buddhas are only teachers. The steadfast and clear-seeing shall obtain release from the kingdom of death.

Dhammapada

Whoso is full of anger, whoso carries hate in his heart, whoso is wicked, hypocritical, and given to cunning, whoso follows error—him know as an outcast.

Vasala Sutta

Whoso opposes ill-will with ill-will can never become pure. Whoso on the contrary awakes himself to good-will, softens those that are full of hate.

Udānavagga

Fall not away from your purpose for the sake of another, however great this latter may be. When once you have seen your goal, hold to it firm and fast.

Dhammapada

Earnestness leads to where death is not; heedlessness is the way of death. Those who continue in earnestness do not die, but the heedless are as if already dead.

Dhammapada

True worship does not consist in the offering of incense, flowers, and other outward things, but in striving ever toward the same goal as He whom we revere.

Jātakamālā

When the virtuous are reviled, it is not of their own pain that they think most, but of the loss of happiness which the slanderers are bringing upon themselves.

Jātakamālā

Idleness is a disgrace; constant sloth is defilement. By strenuous striving and with the help of insight you should pull out the poisoned arrow of indolence.

Uṭṭhāna Sutta

A man is not a master because he imperiously subjects living creatures to pain, but he truly may be so called who has compassion on all that lives.

Dhammapada

Serious among the wanton, watchful among those drugged with sleep, the wise man hastens on like a swift-footed steed among sluggish beasts of burden.

Dhammapada

Let us guard the doors of the senses. Let us be restrained in our eating. Let us vow ourselves to watchfulness, and arm ourselves with an intelligence unclouded.

Majjhima Nikāya

So soon as there springs up within him an angry, malicious thought, some sinful, wrong inclination, he puts it away, removes it, destroys it; he makes it not to be.

Sabbāsava Sutta

Should those who are not of us, O brethren, speak in dispraise of me or of my doctrine or of the brotherhood, that is yet no reason why you should give way to anger.

Brahmajālā Sutta

He who only sees the faults of others and whose thoughts run continually on blame—delusion daily in him grows, and the end of pain for him is still very far away.

Dhammapada

When an angry, malicious thought, a sinful and evil inclination arises in a man, let him throw it away from him, drive it off, destroy it, make it that it shall cease to be.

Sabbāsava Sutta

With all thy strength struggle to cross this great stream of craving. When thou hast known the transience of all things, then shalt thou also know that which is not transient.

Dhammapada

Whoso once was idle and then overthrows idleness, whoso after past sins turns his will towards good, he shines in the darkness of this world like the moon on a cloudless night.

Dhammapada

Awake! Arise! Strive unremittingly for the prize of peace. Do not allow yourselves to be ensnared and overpowered by the Lord of Death through his having beheld your indolence.

Uṭṭhāna Sutta

Whoso allows his heart to follow desires unhindered, far from him Nibbāna for ever dwells. Wherefore bridle your hearts and, away from the world, seek solitude and peace.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Shine for thyself as thine own light; arouse ye quickly and become wise! When ye are free from soil and uncleanness, then shall ye be beyond the reach of decay and death.

Dhammapada

It is good to bridle the mind that is inconstant and difficult to tame, roaming about, now here, now there, whithersoever it pleases. A mind subdued brings happiness.

Dhammapada

If the mental resolve be abstracted from the behaviour, the bodily act is as a piece of rotten wood. Wherefore regulate the mind, and the body of itself will go right.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Those who keep themselves free from all evil, who live in perpetual recollectedness, enlightened ones, rid of all fetters—these are the real nobles of the world.

Udāna

Each should first establish himself in that which is good and true, and only then undertake the instruction of others. Thus doing, he who has insight will avoid much sorrow.

Dhammapada

The true bhikkhu is he who abides in right recollectedness, is patient in cold and heat, in hunger and thirst, and in all bodily affliction, yea, even in the greatest anguish.

Dhammapada

Nerveless sloth the true disciple has cast away; from idle lassitude he is free. Loving the light, intelligent and clear of mind, he purges his heart of all sloth and idleness.

Majjhima Nikāya

The wise shrink only from levity and vulgarity; these lead into further misery the man who, blinded by the desire of the moment, perceives not the gulf that yawns at his feet.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Subdue wrath! Yield not to the impulse of a turbulent heart! Whoso can calm his heart when suddenly it flames up in angry rage—he truly may be called a skilled charioteer.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Look not upon the faults of another—what this one has done or has left undone. Rather turn thine eyes upon thine own perverted ways, thine own omissions and negligences.

Dhammapada

As the Perfect One speaks, so He acts. As the Perfect One acts, so He speaks. And because He speaks as He acts, and acts as He speaks, therefore is He called the Perfect One.

Itivuttuka

Be thoughtful and mindful, O disciples! Cease from indolence; let not the cravings of sense weave themselves about your hearts! Put far from you the devouring fire of heedlessness!

Dhammapada

Even should those who are not of us give utterance to harsh words concerning me or my teaching or my followers, yet, my disciples, this is no excuse for you to give way to anger.

Brahmajālā Sutta

Hatred the disciple casts far from him; he dwells on thoughts that are free from hate. Full of love and sympathy towards every living creature, from all hatred he purifies his heart.

Majjhima Nikāya

He who, dressed in his own garb, pursues his way, striving after peace of mind; who is quiet, modest and subdued; doing hurt to no living being—he truly is a noble, an ascetic, a disciple.

Dhammapada

Whoso lives his life, looking not to pleasure, but with heart well controlled; regulated in his eating, virtuous and diligent—death can no more overthrow him than the storm the rocky mountain.

Dhammapada

The noble swerve not from the right path, let happen what may, and hanker no longer after worldly pleasures. The wise remain calm and constant of mind, alike in joy and in sorrow.

Dhammapada

By effort wisdom is achieved, by heedlessness wisdom is lost. Consider well this double path of rise and fall, and choose the path, following which wisdom grows and increases.

Dhammapada

Whoso fully and faithfully lives the Doctrine, whoso by holiness has conquered what the world calls good and evil, who lives his life in Insight—he truly may be called an ascetic.

Dhammapada

I adjure you, O disciples, for your own sakes be diligent! Devote yourselves to the purification of your own minds. Be earnest, be persevering, be attentive, be thoughtful for your own salvation.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

Half-hearted attentiveness prepares the way for new error and delusion, and allows old error to wax strong. Thorough attention does not allow new error to arise, and destroys the old.

Majjhima Nikāya

So long as anger remains unrestrained, regret burns like a fire. Whoso permits wild passions to inflame his mind lays waste his inward being, and raises a blast that fans the flames anew.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Lighten, O disciples, this heavy ship. When it is emptied, then will it bear you easily away. When ye are free from hates and lusts, then shall ye fare swiftly toward Nibbāna.

Dhammapada

Through right seeing, one crosses the stream of existence. Through zeal and diligence one traverses the ocean of existence in safety. Through effort one vanquishes pain. Through insight one becomes wise.

Alavaka Sutta

I long not for death, I long not for life; I wait till mine hour comes, as a labourer that waiteth for his wages. I long not for death, I long not for life; I wait until mine hour comes, alert and watchful of mind.

Milindapañha

A wholesome word would I say to all that are here assembled together. Dig up like root-diggers the root of craving, that death may not break you down again and again, as the stream breaks down the water-grass.

Dhammapada

The impermanence, painfulness, and unsubstantiality of all things meet my gaze at every turn; wherefore let me use to the utmost the present hour, firm in the conviction that now is the fitting time to seek after wisdom.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Go ye, O disciples, and wander forth for the gain of the many, the welfare of the many, in compassion for the world, for the good, the gain, the welfare of men. Publish the Doctrine glorious! Proclaim a life of holiness perfect and pure!

Mahāvagga

A man is not venerable merely because his hair is white. Whoso loves truth and does his duty, in whom dwell goodness, patience, and self-control; who is steadfast and free from fault—such an one with reason may be called venerable.

Dhammapada

If we tread the path of true wisdom by avoiding the two extremes of error (gratification and mortification) we shall reach the highest perfection. If religion consisted only in flesh-mortifying asceticism, it never could lead us to peace.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Since cravings and discontents, evil and grievous lusts quickly overpower him whose sight and thoughts go unguarded, therefore let us be diligent and watchful, let us give good heed and guard with zeal all our seeing and thinking.

Majjhima Nikāya

The desiring of many things brings care; the desiring of but little brings peace and quietness. If those ought to desire little whose aim is peace and quietness, how much more so those whose goal is perfect deliverance?

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

If you subjugate the enemy by force, you add to his hatred, but a victory achieved through kindness softens the heart. Hatred never is quenched by hatred. Hatred is allayed only by thoughts free from hatred. This is an eternal law.

Dhammapada

The wise, firmly established in the Teaching and delighting in righteousness, bears about with him senses well subdued. After he has broken all fetters, left all pain behind him, he clings no more to the world of the seen and heard.

Amagandha Sutta

Whoso is pure, still, and serene like the radiant moon, whoso has brought his desires into subjection, —him call I a noble. Whoso, meek and unfaltering, bears in patience undeserved abuse, ill-treatment, and bonds—him, verily, do I call a noble.

Dhammapada

Patience is the highest virtue ; long-suffering is the supreme Nibbāna ; so rings out the word of the Buddha. Whoso works harm to another is no disciple, and he is no ascetic who gives pain to any fellow-creature.

Dhammapada

Recognising himself everywhere and in all things of constant mind, the disciple permeates the whole world with thoughts of love, sympathy, compassion, and peace—with wide, deep, limitless loving kindness, free from all anger and hate.

Majjhima Nikāya

Whoso is brave, noble, strong and wise, and, having vanquished craving, is enlightened and purified—him call I a noble. Whoso lives free from ill-will among the unfriendly, mild among the cruel, and self-subdued among the desirous—him call I a noble.

Dhammapada

Be ye a light unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge unto yourselves. Betake yourselves to none other outward refuge. Hold fast to the truth as to a lamp. Hold fast to the truth as to a refuge. Seek not for safety in anyone whatsoever outside yourselves.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

Overcome that desire to which both gods and men are so completely subject. Let not the right moment escape thee. Those who have allowed the fitting time to pass away unused will have good cause to lament when they find themselves upon the downward path.

Uṭṭhāna Sutta

You say that a man should be merry while he is young, and when he is old then he may be religious. Like a robber, however, death is following us all, sword in hand, eager to cut down his prey; why then should we wait for old age ere we turn our minds to religion?

Fo-sho-hing-tsán-ching

The wise man who by earnest striving has vanquished sloth, ascends the watch-tower of insight, and, freed from pain, looks down thence over the pain-filled earth. As one upon a mountain top looks down on those in the valley below, so does he see beneath him the hosts of the witless and unthinking.

Dhammapada

Foolishness and blindness abound everywhere among both low and high; unthinking, they obey the imperious behests of passion and desire. But this leads at last to a life charged with continual care. The mind is darkened; hence the outer form is thought to be a thing of permanence.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Even if the body is clothed in the layman's dress, yet may the mind mount to the highest things. The man of the world and the hermit differ not from one another if both alike have conquered selfishness. So long as the heart is bound in fleshly bonds, all outward tokens of the ascetic are useless.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Few men reach that other shore. The great majority only run back and forth this side the stream. But those who are devoted to truth, who in accordance with the well-proclaimed Doctrine strive only towards the one goal, shall reach that other shore, swimming across the raging river of death.

Dhammapada

The real treasure is that laid up through charity and pity, temperance and self-control. The treasure thus hidden is secure, and passes not away. Though he leave the fleeting riches of the world, this a man carries with him—a treasure that no wrong of others and no thief can steal away.

Nidhikanda Sutta

Even though the body is adorned with jewels, yet may the heart be free from worldly inclinations. Whoso bears joy and sorrow with equal mind has religion, even though outwardly he may seem to be of the world. The robe of the ascetic does not shield one from worldly thoughts.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

And you, my disciples, who have been taught the Most Excellent Law, think ever of this, that all things pass away. Wherefore be no more bowed down by care. Use with diligence the means I have provided for you. Reach forward towards your native country where there is no more parting. Only the light of wisdom which I have unveiled can chase away the darkness wherewith this world is covered.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

"Warriors, warriors, Lord, we call ourselves. In what way then are we warriors?"

"We wage war, O disciples: therefore are we called warriors."

"Wherefore, Lord, do we wage war?"

"For lofty virtue, for high endeavour, for sublime wisdom—for these things do we wage war; therefore are we called warriors."

Anguttara Nikāya

No decrying of other sects, no depreciating of others without cause; but, on the contrary, a rendering of honour to other sects for whatever in them is worthy of honour! By so doing, both one's own sect will be helped forward and other sects benefited; by acting otherwise, one's own sect will be destroyed in the injuring of others.

Asoka Inscription

Of whatsoever teaching thou art sure that it leads to passion and not to peace; to pride and not to humility; to the desiring of much and not to the desiring of little; to the love of society and not to the love of solitude; to idleness and not to earnest striving; to a mind hard to pacify and not to a mind easy to assuage—that, O Gotami, note well! That is not the Dhamma; that is not Vinaya; that is not the teaching of the Master.

Vinaya Pitaka

By ourselves is evil done,
By ourselves we pain endure;
By ourselves we cease from wrong,
By ourselves become we pure.
No one saves us but ourselves;
No one can and no one may.
We ourselves must walk the Path;
Buddhas merely teach the way.

Dhammapada

(Dr. Paul Carus' translation.)

Even if robbers and murderers with a saw should sever your limbs and joints, whoso gave way to anger thereat would not be following my teaching. Thus, rather, my disciples, ought ye to behave: "Our mind shall not be moved, no evil word shall escape our lips, friendly and sympathetic will we remain, with heart full of love and void of secret malice ; and that person will we penetrate with loving thoughts, with thoughts wide, deep, limitless, purged from all anger and hate." Even thus, my disciples, ought ye to do.

Majjhima Nikāya

Happy is the Buddhist's fate,
For his heart knows naught of hate.
Haters may be all around,
Yet in him no hate is found.
Happy is the Buddhist's fate ;
He all pining doth abate,
Pining may seize all around,
Yet in him no pining's found.
Happy is the Buddhist's fate ;
Him no greed will agitate.
In the world greed may abound,
Yet in him no greed is found.
Happily then let us live !
Joyously our service give !
Quench all pining, hate and greed !
Happy is the life we lead !

Dhammapada

(Dr. Paul Carus' translation.)

WISDOM

Of wisdom who shall rightly speak, save those who are themselves the wise ? Yet may one who has not himself scaled the lofty mountain summit, but only stood at its base and gazed upward at its towering mass, be able to impart some notion of its form to those who as yet have never seen it at all. If the reader bears this in mind, no great harm will be done by this attempt to sketch the greatest achievement open to man; namely, the acquisition of that quality most subtle and most rare, called wisdom.

Its possession in perfection implies a calm, poised mind, serene and undisturbed under any circumstances that can possibly arise, and always ready with the exactly proper and fitting word or deed, at the exactly proper and fitting place and time. Such perfection of balance and mastery of circumstance, however, can only be supposed to exist in a mind that has arrived at a full and perfect understanding of the nature of the world and life; a mind between which and things as they are there is no smallest shade of disharmony, but the most perfect and complete correspondence. For to what is all unsettling of mental equipoise due but to the effort on a man's part to make himself believe that things are not as they are, but as he thinks he would like them to be! Restored equilibrium, balance, sanity—what alone deserves the name of sanity—can only come with a clear envisagement and unreserved acceptance of facts without any reference whatever to personal likes or dislikes.

By the Buddha, the three grand characteristics of all existence were declared to be transience, subjection to pain, and unsubstantiality. Apart from any appearance which it might for the moment present, the world with all that is in it was declared to be in actuality a thing essentially evanescent, grievous and illusory. Such was the result he arrived at as the outcome of his effort to ascertain the true nature of things, and it is very important to know that this is all it is—the simple outcome of a long-continued and laborious endeavour to arrive at a correct understanding of the world and of life. In no sense whatever is it to be taken as, following the bent of nature, has been done by some—for the inculcation of an emotion—that of despair, for instance. It is put forth as a simple statement of fact: this and nothing else. The only question remaining is, is it a fact? Is it really the case that, apart from momentary phases, the inner and essential nature of the world is transience, pain, and unsubstantiality?

As regards the pain of the world, that is already dealt with in the first of the four Holy Truths; we have now only to consider the two remaining characteristics of transience and unsubstantiality.

In effect these two, transience and unsubstantiality, are the same. What is transient is unsubstantial; what is unsubstantial is transient. Whence then this repetition and division of the same characteristic into two separate expressions? Simply this: transience (Pali: *Anicca*) is the proposition of the elusive, ever-changing, flux-like nature of existence as applied to the external phenomena of the world. Unsubstantiality, on the other hand (Pali: *Anatta*), is the same proposition applied to the internal phenomena of man himself. This distinction, this repetition of the same proposition under two different forms, has been made necessary, not by reason of any distinction really existing between external and internal phenomena (Buddhism recognises no such differentiation), but because of the fact that since ever men began to think they have been the prey of a huge error—the grand delusion of all the delusions that have ever dominated the human mind, from which indeed, as from some insane root, they all have sprung, namely this—the belief of the existence in man, in contradistinction to everything else in the world, of something permanent and persisting, some undecaying and unchanging substance called variously "soul," "spirit," or "Atma".

Needless to say, this is precisely that portion of the teaching of the Buddha which has proved the greatest stumbling-block in the way of its acceptance by Western inquirers. In the West, the belief in "soul" for the great majority is bound up with adherence to all right ways of living. That belief destroyed—so it seems to many—the very foundations of morality are done away with and chaos come again. And when it is pointed out, as a Buddhist cannot help but do, that "'soul'-less" Buddhist lands are not less moral, but if anything more so, than Christian and other countries where the belief in "soul" obtains, they are not in the least reassured, but only more perplexed, thrown into still greater confusion.

This confusion and perplexity might perhaps be removed if a clear understanding were come to as to the meaning to be attached to the word "soul". If, for instance, by "soul" is meant a metaphysical entity of some kind resident in each human being, and eternally separate and apart from a similarly constituted metaphysical entity supposed to be resident in every other human being, then is Buddhism unequivocally a "soul"-less religion, for it cannot find that such an eternal entity exists in any man. Unhesitatingly it affirms that the elements that go to make up a human being are as subject to the law of change and impermanence as are the elements that go to the make-up of any other being.

And it is with an affirmation rather than a denial that Buddhism is here most concerned. Let the believer in "soul" cling to that belief if he so wish, only—such is the doctrine of the Buddha—such "soul" must not be considered to be any more eternal than a similar "soul" located in rocks or trees or animals might be supposed to be; for all existences, without any exception, are evanescent, subject to pain, and destitute of any permanent, eternally persisting basic substance.

This, indeed, is the crux of the whole question as to the "soul" in man: is the universe a one, undivided thing? or does there run through it some huge, tremendous line of cleavage on one side of which stands man, and upon the other side all other orders of existence save man? The contention of the Buddha is that the universe, as its very name implies, is One, without break of any kind, and that all that exist, from atoms to angels and gods alike, come under the power of the one law of impermanence and unsubstantiality, *Anicca* and *Anatta*. Yet, indeed, it is with him no mere contention, but, as already said, the statement of truth he had won to as the unique reward of a long and strenuous search; a truth, moreover, which from the standpoint of calm and unprejudiced reasoning remains wholly unassailable.

It is possible, however, that some of those who shrink from the statement, thus crudely and baldly put, that there is no immortal soul in man, have no notion of any eternal entity existing in man, but are only shocked by the apparent denial of what they regard as the higher and holier part of man. It is with them a question not so much of the eternity of the "soul" as of the existence of a motive to right living. And if this be their understanding of "soul," that it is only the symbol for those higher hopes and upward aspirations that are the noblest attributes of men, then, in this sense of the word, Buddhism is no denier of the soul. As, indeed, how could it be? Is not the whole of the first stage of the Path simply the development and perfecting of the higher attributes of love, compassion, forbearance, non-resentment and self-forgetfulness?

Self-forgetfulness! here is the very word we are seeking, for self-forgetfulness, unselfishness, is the very crown and summit of all virtue; and what is self-forgetfulness but that. in the domain of conduct, which, in the form adapted for its acceptance by the intellect, is called the *Anatta* doctrine? What else? Most men, nay, all men of right mind and feelings, readily grant their assent to self-sacrifice in the field of conduct. Their heartiest, most deeply felt admiration is excited by acts of heroism and self-abnegation, and the more complete the sacrifice is, the greater is the approval they are ready to bestow upon it, even when they feel that they themselves would be unable to act up to his principle as the hero has done who commands their admiration. Few, if any, are to be found who would think of withholding their approval of this principle, much less of maintaining an opposite rule of conduct. Yet, when this same negation of self is put forth in the form of an intellectual proposition for acceptance by the mind, in its formulation of the scheme of existence, many shrink from it in dismay, while some regard it with feelings not far removed from horror!

No explanation of this evident anomaly seems at hand save this, that the mental conceptions of the majority of men have not as yet been brought into full touch with their principles of conduct. A hiatus exists somewhere which it must be the endeavour of Buddhism to remove.

All men recognise—as perforce they must—the evanescence and unsubstantiality of all things outside themselves; the teaching of science, from the distant days of Heraklitus down to modern times, is nothing but a series of variations on this one theme. The unwillingness to recognise that inside man, no less than outside him, all is perishable and illusory, is due solely to the sway over men's minds of that huge error to which we have already alluded, and which has been aptly called in an old Oriental treatise "The Great Delusion," since from it, as from a poisonous root, have sprung and still spring all the sorrows that afflict the world. The doctrine of *Anatta*, of non-self, or non-"soul," as set forth by the Buddha, is simply an attempt to counteract this delusion—this deep-rooted tendency in the minds of men to draw a line of demarcation where none exists, between themselves and the other orders of existence. It is the uncompromising assertion of the unity of all existence in this respect also, where the great majority of men so obstinately strive to make distinction and difference.

Scarcely anything, we imagine, requires to be said in support of the doctrine of *Anicca*, of the fluidity and impermanence of phenomenal things: yet we may perhaps be excused for quoting one of the latest statements of modern Science on this point.

"We believe—we must believe, in this day—that everything in the universe of worlds and stars is made of atoms in quantities x, y, or z, respectively. Man and women, mice and elephants, the red belts of Jupiter and the rings of Saturn, are one and all but ever shifting, ever varying, swarms of atoms.

"Every mechanical work of air, earth, fire and water, every criminal act, every human deed of love or valour; what is it all, pray, but the relation of one swarms of atoms to another? Here, for example, is a swarm of atoms, vibrating, scintillant, martial—

they call it a soldier, and anon, some thousands of miles away upon the South African veldt, that swarm dissolves—dissolves, forsooth, because of another little swarm—they call it lead. What a phantasmagoric dance it is, this dance of atoms! For mark you the mutabilities of things. These same atoms, may be, or others like them, come together again, vibrating, clustering, interlocking, combining, and there results a woman, a flower, a blackbird, or a locust, as the case may be. But to-morrow again the dance is ended, and the atoms are far away; some of them are in the fever germs that broke up the dance; others are in 'the green hair of the grave,' and others are blown about the antipodes on the winds of ocean. The mutabilities of things, and likewise the tears of things: for one thing after another,

> 'Like snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
> Lighting a little hour or two, is gone!'

and the eternal, ever-changing dance goes on."[1]

This is well and finely put, and in complete accord with the finding of that Awakened One who long ago, under the tree near Benares, saw the transience and the sorrowfulness and the unsubstantiality of all existence, gross or subtle, low or lofty, mean or high. And to recognise this, the truth about things, not merely as an intellectual opinion, but as a complete and overmastering conviction of the whole being,—this is to have attained to wisdom. Only in this Right Understanding of the nature of existence is to be found safe and certain refuge from the fever and fret of a life that still hugs delusion to its breast.

Henceforth the things of the world sit but lightly upon a man. He uses them, but he does not set his

[1] *The New Knowledge*, by Prof. R. K. Duncan.

heart upon them, for he has recognised them for what they are. Henceforth his face is set towards the permanent and the sorrow-free, the incomparable surety of Nibbāna. Heart charged with love and goodwill to all, he goes his way through life, calm, serene, content. Sorrows may come upon him, but they move him not, for his eye is steadily fixed upon that which is the certain ending of all sorrow. And joys may come, but these, too, avail naught to mar the perfection of his serenity, for he looks forward to what is better far than any joy ever known to son of earth, even to the final and complete deliverance of the mind, the deliverance that comes through wisdom.

RIGHT UNDERSTANDING
RIGHT MINDEDNESS

Above all things, banish the thought of "self".

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

To bring self-seeking to an end, that is blessedness.

Udānavagga

All things are transient. Work out your own salvation without ceasing.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

Everything that arises in the course of nature is subject to the law of cause and effect.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Unceasingly should the wise purge their hearts of dross, as the smith refines the silver.

Dhammapada

Whoso knows truth as truth, and delusion as delusion, attains to truth, and journeys in the right path.

Dhammapada

Thinking continually of grey old age, what joy can possessions afford to me, whose years, like the wind, so soon are overpast?

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The world is subject to death and decay. Therefore the wise man does not grieve, for he knows the nature of the world.

Subha Sutta

Worldly joys, like to our bodies, hasten all to decay. Whoso has this before his eyes and yet yields to lust, behaves like a brute.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Look upon this world as upon the foam on the waters or as a phantom in the air; then shall the Lord of death evermore seek thee in vain.

Dhammapada

When the wise recognise the characteristics of this world to be transience, unsubstantiality and pain, how can they any longer find joy therein ?

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

I reach toward that happiness which does not perish and pass away ; which has not originated in and does not depend upon riches or beauty.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

As a deep, limpid, mountain lake lies bright and clear to the light, so bright and clear becomes the mind of the wise through the pure word of truth.

Dhammapada

As the great ocean, disciples, is penetrated throughout by the savour of salt, so is my doctrine in all its parts permeated by the spirit of deliverance.

Cullavagga

Not in the air, not in the caves of the mountains ; nay, nowhere in the wide world is there a spot where a man can escape the consequences of his evil deeds.

Dhammapada

Pluck from thee all self-love, as men in autumn pluck the lotus-flower. Travel the Path which the Holy One has pointed out, the path that leads to Nibbāna.

Dhammapada

The world is carried away by the stream of craving; from its whirlpool there is no salvation. But wisdom is a staunch vessel and meditation a firm support.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The world is covered with darkness, so that only a few are able to see clearly. Only a few, like the bird that has escaped the snare, attain to the path that leads upward.

Dhammapada

Be ye heirs of truth, O disciples, be not heirs of worldly things. Out of compassion speak I thus unto you. O that my disciples may inherit truth and not the things of this world!

Majjhima Nikāya

A stain there is that more besoils than any other stain; it is blindness, of all blemishes the most grievous. Purified from this stain, then are ye stainless indeed, my disciples.

Dhammapada

Whoso busies himself in fitting meditation quickly finds joy in all that is good. He sees that riches and beauty are transient, and that wisdom is the most precious of all jewels.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Following upon insight into the transience of all things, the wise man strenuously puts away all idleness. The fear of death and rebirth spurs him on, so that he loiters not by the way.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Entangled in the meshes of speculation, the inexperienced son of earth never gets free from the bondage of old age and death, sorrow and pain, grief and despair; he never gets free, I say, from sorrow.

Majjhima Nikāya

Whoso has understood this world to its foundations and perceived the highest truth; whoso has crossed the ever-flowing stream of existence, and, free from all fetters, has subdued passion, such an one is called wise by those of understanding.

Mūni Sutta

Nothing in this world is constant. The lust of the senses passes like the flash of the lightning. Like the thunderstroke, old age and death fall upon all creatures. With this knowledge, of what use to us can a sinful birth be?

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Whoso is fettered by the lusts of the senses dwells in the world of birth and death, as the spider dwells in its self-woven web. Tearing this bond asunder, the wise go hence, quit of all longings, leaving all pain behind.

Dhammapada

Whoso perceives with subdued mind that all that has arisen is transient and full of pain; whoso comprehends that real being there is none in anything—he thirsts no more after the sorrow of existence. This is the path of purification.

Dhammapada

How ruinous is the blindness of the children of this world! Careless they live their lives though they everywhere see that the body falls into dust. A heart that can beat really beats in their breast, and yet they never think of the transience of all things.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

With the comprehension of the transience, unsubstantiality and painful nature of all things, arises the sun of true wisdom; wanting it, there can be no true enlightenment. In this comprehension alone lies the goal. Whoso strives not after it will be dashed in pieces by death.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Whoso has deeply pondered over the real cause of all evil-doing, and has destroyed it while yet in the germ, never again will he give way to desire after it. Such a wise one, perceiving the ultimate end of all that arises and passes away, renouncing all disputation over mere words, returns no more to existence.

Mūni Sutta

How can that yield us joy, which so quickly withers away, once the signs of decay stamped on all things have shown themselves upon it? What now is pranked in all the bloom of youth will soon wither and fade. When one reflects on these things, should he not long to be released from them?

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Two joys, disciples, there be, and what are these two? The joy of enjoyment and the joy of renunciation; and the nobler of the two is the joy of renunciation.

Two joys, O disciples, there be, and what are these two? Worldly joy and unworldly joy; and the nobler of the two is unworldly joy.

Anguttara Nikāya

As in a dark room the light of a lamp illumines all surrounding objects, of whatsoever colour they may be, so does the light of wisdom light up all men when they turn themselves toward it, whatever their position may be. A retired hermit may miss the goal, and a dweller in the world may become one of the wise.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

The thought, "I myself," is thought only by the foolish. The wise man knows that there is no foundation for such a thought. Searching the world with true vision he comes to the conclusion that all is void and subject to swift decay. One thing alone endures unbroken: the Law. When a man has attained to this Insight, then sees he the truth.

Fo-sho-hing-tsan-ching

Strictly speaking, the duration of the life of a living being is exceedingly brief, lasting only while a thought lasts. Just as a chariot-wheel in rolling rolls only on one point of the tire, and in resting rests only on one point, in exactly the same way the life of a living being lasts only for the period of a single thought. As soon as that thought has ceased, the being is said to have ceased.

Visuddhi Magga

Whether Buddhas arise, or Buddhas do not arise, it remains a fact, and the fixed and necessary constitution of being, that all its constituents are transitory. This fact a Buddha discovers and masters, and when he has discovered and mastered it, he announces, teaches, publishes, proclaims, discloses, minutely explains and makes it clear, that all the constituents of being are transitory.

Anguttara Nikāya

Whether Buddhas arise, or Buddhas do not arise, it remains a fact, and the fixed and necessary constitution of being, that all its constituents lack an enduring substance. This fact a Buddha discovers and masters, and when he has discovered and mastered it, he announces, teaches, publishes, proclaims, discloses, minutely explains and makes it clear, that all the constituents of being lack an enduring substance.

Anguttara Nikāya

There are two paths of error which he who is striving for salvation should equally avoid. The one, of sensual enjoyment and the gratification of passion, is base, vulgar, degrading and ruinous: it is the way of the children of the world. The other, of self-torture and mortification, is sad, painful and useless. The Middle Way alone, which the Perfect One has found, avoids these two paths of error, opens the eyes, endows with discernment, and leads to deliverance, to wisdom, to perfection, to Nibbāna.

Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

Do not go merely by what you hear; do not go merely by what has been handed down from one to another from old time; do not go merely by what is commonly reported; do not go merely by what is found written in the Scriptures; do not go only by subtleties of reasoning and logic; do not go by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by beliefs and views that commend themselves to you as agreeable; do not go merely by what looks to be genuine; do not go merely by the word of some ascetic or superior. But, when of yourselves you indeed know: "This is salutary; this is blameless; this is approved of by the wise; this being done or attempted leads to well-being and to happiness";—then, follow after and abide by that thing.

Anguttara Nikāya

NIBBĀNA

About Nibbāna there is little to be said in the way of exact information. Nibbāna is essentially something to be realised, not to be talked about. In any attempt to describe it in detail, negative terms are all that can be used; it is not this, not that; not anything that can be named or to which a form can be assigned even in words, for it is that which is beyond all names and without all forms. All attempts to describe it in positive terms must necessarily fall short and fail; they can never represent it, they can only *mis*represent it. For this world's words have been designed only for this world's uses; used to describe what is entirely beyond the world, they only stain and sully its white perfection, they only dim the brightness of its matchless radiance.

Is Nibbāna then nothing? Most assuredly not, for the Buddha and His Arahans, those who followed most closely in His steps, expended all their best efforts to reach this very goal, and sheer nothingness has no attractions for anyone. No! Nibbāna is certainly *no thing*, but just as certainly it is *not nothing*, for it *is* that, to reach which the Buddha and his Arahans, those who followed most closely in his steps, expended all their best and most strenuous efforts: and sheer nothingness has no attractions for anyone; for all that Heaven is to the Christian, that Nibbāna is to the Buddhist—and more! The Buddhist has a heaven—many heavens—but beyond and surpassing them all, lies, Nibbāna, the undescribed because the indescribable. How or what it is—this cannot rightly be framed by human thought or speech. All that can be said is that IT IS, and that in the human consciousness that anywhere draws near to it, it produces the feeling of an intense bliss, which, compared with the fitful and feverish excitement that men call pleasure, is as the glow of the noon-day sun to the flicker of a tallow candle.

Moreover, to ask with too great curiosity as to the nature of Nibbāna receives little encouragement in the Buddhist writings. The inquiry is apt to be classed among those questions which it is vain and profitless either to ask or to answer.

It is as if a number of pilgrims upon a journey to a far off city should stop on their way to discuss with one another as to the number of streets in the city, and the fashion of the building of the houses therein, and other kindred details. Doubtless it would be very interesting to these pilgrims to have some trustworthy information on these points, but the immediate business of the moment is not the acquirement of such information, but simply to keep on taking another and yet another step towards the goal of their journey. Once it is reached, all that will be known which in the meantime can only be guessed at.

Similarly, all questions as to the precise nature of Nibbāna are a sheer waste of time, while as yet one has not attained to it; and after one has attained, they are impossible.

Thus, once more Buddhism reveals itself as a religion of the most uncompromising practicality; a religion, moreover, which is simply not understood until it is fully and completely recognised as rather the annunciation of a deed to be done than of an idea to be curiously speculated upon. In the mind of one here and there, who had expected something different, this attitude of Buddhism toward the indefinable may possibly appear just a trifle disappointing; if, however, they will reflect upon it sufficiently long, they will find their disappointment glide by degrees into a profound appreciation of its sound common sense. That, at least, has been the experience of others.

As water does not cling to the lotus-bloom, even so does Nibbāna remain untouched by any evil inclination.

Milindapañha

Health is the chiefest good; content the richest treasure; peace of mind the best friend; and Nibbāna the greatest blessedness.

Dhammapada

Dissolved is the body; sensation has vanished; extinct is perception; the mental functions have come to rest; consciousness is at an end.

Udāna

Absorbed in meditation, the immovable ones who evermore valiantly strive—these, the wise, lay hold of Nibbāna, the good that far outweighs all other good.

Dhammapada

The wise who work no harm to any living creature, who keep the body in subjection—they tread the path to deathlessness. Whoso has reached thither knows sorrow no more.

Dhammapada

Hunger is the most grievous of distresses; the elements of Being are the most grievous of ills. Recognising this for a surety, man attains to Nibbāna, the happiness supreme.

Dhammapada

The disciple who has put away lust and craving, being filled with wisdom, now in this present life has attained to deliverance from death, to quietude, to Nibbāna, to the deathless.

Suttasangaha

Whoso is replete with all good, the bhikkhu who holds to the Teaching of the Awakened One, let him turn to the land of peace where impermanency finds no place, let him turn toward blessedness.

Dhammapada

When the fire of Lust is gone out, then Peace is gained. When the fires of Hate and Delusion are gone out, then Peace is gained. When the troubles of mind that arise through blind credulity and all other defects have ceased, then Peace is gained.

Nidānakaṭha

Whoso has escaped from the difficult, trackless labyrinth of Samsāra, who has crossed the flood, reached the shore, self-possessed, beyond the reach of doubt or uncertainty, having freed himself from all that is of earth and attained to Nibbāna—him call I a noble one.

Dhammapada

The body of the perfected one subsists, disjoined from the stream of Becoming. So long as his body subsists, so long will gods and men behold him. When the body dissolves, the term of life exhausted, gods and men shall behold him no more.

Brahmajālasutta

And thus cognising he is delivered from the evil of craving, from the evil of Becoming, from the evil of Error, from the evil of Delusion. And he knows: "In being delivered lies Deliverance. Rebirth is ended, lived out the Holy Life, done all that was to do; for me this world is no more." Yea, this he knows.

Majjhima Nikāya

There exists, O Sirs, a realm wherein is neither earth nor water, neither flame nor air; nor the vast ether nor the infinite of thought; nor utter void nor the co-existence of cognition and non-cognition is there—neither this world nor another, neither sun nor moon. That, I declare unto you as neither Becoming nor yet passing away—neither life nor death nor being born; unlocalised, unchanging, and uncaused—that is the ending of Suffering.

Udānavagga

There is, O Sirs, an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed. Were there not this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, there would be no escape from the world of the born, originated, created, formed.

But since there is an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, therefore is there escape from the born, the originated, the created, the formed.

Udānavagga

This principle of Nibbāna, O king, with its fullness of peace and blessedness and joy—IS. Whoso in all ways directs his life aright—he realises this principle through his wisdom and becomes master of it, even as a pupil by perfect understanding and by attention to the instruction of his teacher might master any craft. And if thou askest : " What are the signs of Nibbāna ? " I answer : " Freedom from danger and distress ; confidence, peace, quietude, happiness, blessedness, delicacy, purity, spiritual refreshment.

Milindapañha

AFTERWORD

There were once some men who dwelt in a prison wherein was great darkness, and the men had a bandage over their eyes so that they did not know that they were in darkness, nor yet that it was a prison wherein they were confined ; and they passed their time therein in many and diverse ways.

Some of them sat on the floor of the prison all the day, playing with toys which they had, like to children. Some of them groped round the walls of prison and formed many interesting opinions about the shape and strength and such like of the walls, concerning the which opinions they found no small delight in talking with those of like mind. Others of the prisoners had learned that there was an upper part of the prison, and had also learned that it was verily a prison wherein they dwelt, and these devised with much ingenuity a very secret way of holding converse with the prisoners that were in the upper part of the prison, for they thought that those prisoners might be able to help them to escape. These were very serious men. There were also many other occupations among the prisoners, the which, however, are too numerous here to make mention of.

Also, from time to time, there came a visitor to the prison, who spoke to the prisoners and said: *My* *friends, what do ye here all the day, playing with toys and busied in other idle and useless matters? Wherefore seek ye not to win your way out?*

And some of them who were willing he helped to get the bandage somewhat from off their eyes, so that they saw a little in the darkness and found the way out, and so reached the open air and liberty.

* * *

The prison is the world, and the prisoners in it are the men of this world.

The great darkness of the prison is ignorance, and the bandage over the eyes of the prisoners is Self-ness.

Those who spent their time playing with toys are Lovers of Sense-Delights.

The dealers in interesting opinions are Metaphysical Speculators, and those who held converse with the prisoners in the upper part of the prison are the Worshippers of the Gods.

The Visitor is a Buddha.

The Way Out is the Holy Eight-stepped Path, and the Open Air is Nibbāna.

THE END

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